

# The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

*For people caring about New York's trees and forests*

July/August 2014



*Member Profile: Jimmy Bulich*

*Volume 52 Number 4*



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Please address all membership fees and change of address requests to PO Box 541, Lima, NY 14485. 1-800-836-3566. Cost of family membership/subscription is \$35.

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[www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org)

**COVER:** Jimmy Bulich and white oak on his property. When doing TSI work or placing a tree tube over a sapling, I am hoping a few trees will reach this size in 100 years. For member profile see page 21. Photo courtesy of Jimmy Bulich.

# From The President

I was reminded recently how fundamentally vital volunteers are to our organization. The most immediately obvious contributions to me at the state level are the NYFOA board. *All* of your board members and officers are volunteers who receive no compensation for their labors on behalf of this organization. They participate in board meetings and conference calls, assume extra duties, volunteer for special



assignments and so forth. As I write this we are preparing for our one and a half day board meeting at the Arnot Forest. Many person-hours are spent to keep this

organization vibrant at the state level in support of our mission, our overall support of members and our support of chapters. See the page opposite for a list of the current board members.

In addition to all the board members who have served over the years, we continue to scan past issues of *The New York Forest Owner* into our archives on [www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org). I'm very much impressed with the many authors who have made contributions over the past 20 years, often times as regular columnists. Some of the names of frequent contributors are probably familiar to you, others may not be: **Douglas Allen** (special note... 100 articles!), **Bob Beyfuss**, **Mary Binder**, **Mike Birmingham**, **John Braubitz**, **Hugh Canham**, **Brett Chedzoy**, **David Colligan**, **Derek Conant**, **Jill**

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Please share this magazine with a neighbor and urge them to join NYFOA. By gaining more members, NYFOA's voice will become stronger!

**Kay, Henry Kernan, Alan Knight, Peter Levatich, Jane Sorenson Lord, Mary Beth Malmsheimer, Robert W. Malmsheimer, John Marchant, Kevin Mathers, Thom J. McEvoy, Charles Mowatt, Jerry Michael, Maureen Mullen, Rebecca G. Nisley, Jim Ochterski, Erin O'Neill, Carly Neumann, Dan Palm, Ron Pedersen, Edward and Wanda Piestrak, Norman Richards, Bruce Robinson, Rebecca Schneider, Shavonne Sargent, Alexandra Silva, Dinnie Sloman, Kelly Smallidge, Peter Smallidge, Wes Suhr, John Sullivan, Kristi L. Sullivan, David W. Taber, Rich Taber, Mark Whitmore, Carl Wiedemann**, and operating behind the scenes on our Member profile series, **Shorna Broussard Allred**.

My apologies to those I may have inadvertently missed. Is there an article in you that you'd like to share?

Each chapter has their own steering

*continued on page 11*

The mission of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) is to promote sustainable forestry practices and improved stewardship on privately owned woodlands in New York State. NYFOA is a not-for-profit group of people who care about NYS's trees and forests and are interested in the thoughtful management of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

**Join!** NYFOA is a not-for-profit group promoting stewardship of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations. Through local chapters and statewide activities, NYFOA helps woodland owners to become responsible stewards and helps the interested public to appreciate the importance of New York's forests.

Join NYFOA today and begin to receive its many benefits including: six issues of *The New York Forest Owner*, woodwalks, chapter meetings, and statewide meetings.

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( ) I/We do not own woodland but support the Association's objectives.

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# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir

My son, Paul Nowak has a tree farm and is a member of NYFOA. I enjoy reading your publication and I thought you would be interested in what I discovered in a tree where I was hunting deer last season. I was in a ladder stand about fifteen feet from my discovery. I happen to look behind me when this came into view — “A man in the tree” (see photo included). I was rather astounded! I just had to take a photo of it.

My son had some harvesting of trees done about 10 years ago. He hired a forester to mark trees to cut down. Most were good trees and a few were culls. “The man in the tree” cherry tree was marked to be cut and if you look closely, the marking is in the area where the man’s shirt is. The loggers missed the tree. That was years ago. Nature sure plays surprises on us.

I’ll be sitting in the same stand this fall for deer season and I will have some company.

Incidentally, I harvested a nice six point buck for the stand last season.

Yours truly  
Leo Nowak

NYFOA welcomes “Letters to the Editor.”  
Please send all correspondence to NYFOA,  
134 Lincklaen St., Cazenovia, NY 13035 or  
mmalmshe@syr.edu



An advertisement for Colligan Law's branch office. The background is a photograph of a forest with tall, thin trees and a path leading through them. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. In the foreground, there is a scroll with text and a small green leaf icon. The text on the scroll reads: "Colligan Law's idea of a branch office. The lawyers of Colligan Law spend a great deal of time in the woods. Not literally of course, but by advising clients in such timber- and forestry-related issues as litigation, energy and recreational leasing, land use, tax issues, warranty and title matters, boundary and easement issues, and all other complex issues facing the timber and forestry industries. Contact Dave Colligan at 716.885.1150 or at dcolligan@colliganlaw.com to learn how we'll go out on a limb for you every day. Learn more at www.ForestryLaw.com." Below the scroll is the Colligan Law LLP logo, which consists of a blue and green leaf-like shape next to the text "COLLIGAN LAW LLP" and "ADVOCATES FOR BUSINESS AND COMMUNITY." Below the logo is the tagline "We never get lost in the woods." and the website "www.colliganlaw.com". On the right side of the advertisement, there is vertical text: "Colligan Law LLP | 12 Fountain Plaza | Buffalo, NY 14202".

# The NYFOA Scholarship Fund

JIM MINOR

In 1996 the New York Forest Owners Association and the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) formally agreed to the establishment of a permanent endowment for forestry education and research purposes at the College. It is known as *The NYFOA Endowment Fund*. As stated in the agreement, "Grants and awards shall be assigned by the ESF Chair of the Faculty of Forestry, in consultation with the President of NYFOA." Traditionally this has been given to the Junior with the highest grade point average in the Department of Forest and Natural Resources Management.

Each April ESF hosts their Scholarship Appreciation luncheon at ESF's main campus in Syracuse, NY. Many of this year's ESF scholarship winners were in attendance along with their sponsors. The NYFOA scholarship winner this year is **Paul M. Picciano**. Paul grew up in Tully NY, located about 15 miles south of ESF's main campus. Paul tells us that what got him interested in forestry was growing up hunting, fishing, and trapping. He spent most of his time in and around the forests of Central New York. What



Paul M. Picciano

got him most interested in forestry was the idea of being able to manage land to provide better habitat for wildlife. He also states, "There's nothing I like more than spending time in the outdoors."

Last summer Paul worked under Dr. Ralph Nyland and Eddie Bevilacqua as a Research Aide, and this summer he plans to work as a Research Aide under Dr. Chris Nowak. In the future he plans on pursuing a graduate degree in either fisheries or wildlife management after he receive his BS in Forest Resources Management next spring.

The NYFOA Scholarship Fund is based on an endowment from which the interest is used to fund the individual scholarships, one per year. The amount is modest but could grow with additional monies supplied to the base endowment. Individual NYFOA members probably represent the greatest potential sources of support over the long run. Donations, in the form of memorials, honoraria and bequests, would be a very appropriate means of commemorating personal relationships through demonstrated support for the type of study vital to the needs of forest owners, present and future. Individuals wishing to make such a contribution should make their checks payable to ESF College Foundation and mail them directly to the Development Office, SUNY-ESF, One Forestry Drive, Syracuse, New York 13210. Please note on your contribution that it is to be directed to the NYFOA Scholarship Fund. Gifts are deductible to the extent provided by law.

On a related note, chairman of the Department of Forest and Natural Resources Management at ESF and NYFOA board member, David Newman, tells us that this year their department had the highest number of graduating students in many years **and** a very high percentage had secured a career-related, private sector job. Congratulations to all involved! 🏆

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# Ask A Professional

PETER SMALLIDGE AND BRETT CHEDZOY



Peter Smallidge



Brett Chedzoy

*Landowner questions are addressed by foresters and other natural resources professionals. Landowners should be careful when interpreting answers and applying this general advice to their property because landowner objectives and property conditions will affect specific management options. When in doubt, check with your regional DEC office or other service providers. Landowners are also encouraged to be active participants in Cornell Cooperative*

*Extension and NYFOA programs to gain additional, often site-specific, answers to questions. To submit a question, email to Peter Smallidge at [pjs23@cornell.edu](mailto:pjs23@cornell.edu) with an explicit mention of "Ask a Professional." Additional reading on various topics is available at [www.forestconnect.info](http://www.forestconnect.info)*

## Question: (Billy F., Maine)

I have a 12 to 15 acre patch of woods that was selectively cut a few years ago. I would like to develop silvopasture to support my livestock. I've seen several of the ForestConnect webinars on the subject. How do I find a forester familiar with silvopasture and are there any special harvesting considerations?

## Response:

Silvopasture is a land management system that simultaneously and sustainably manages for forest products, livestock, and forage on the same land at the same time. Your woodlot may be well suited to silvopasture, and most northeastern farms have significant woodlot acreage. There are benefits for your livestock, your timber and your forage. The webinars archived at [www.youtube.com/ForestConnect](http://www.youtube.com/ForestConnect) are a good source of information, and there is also a bulletin and several other resources on this subject in the publications section of [www.forestconnect.info](http://www.forestconnect.info) When properly applied, silvopasture has numerous

benefits including more deliberate woodlot management than is typical on private lands, improved herd health and production, reduced dependency on supplemental feed, and a four-legged work force to

control interfering and invasive vegetation. Just as in forest management, you will want to use appropriate best management practices (BMPs) to ensure healthy trees, tree regeneration, healthy animals, and conservation of soils.

Although there are few foresters who have experience with silvopasture, it is their attitude towards silvopasture that is most important. Most foresters were trained to never put livestock in the woods. Based on the historic uses of livestock in the woods, that used to be good advice. Previously livestock were allowed to "continuously graze" on a large section for an extended period of time. This practice degraded the woods. Recent developments in portable electric fence technologies, management intensive or rotational grazing, and forage management allow livestock in the woods without the problems associated with past practices. Foresters know of the historic practices, and some are willing to learn about these new practices.



*Some foresters have participated in field workshops, conferences, and webinars to learn about current practices that allow for the sustainable pasturing of livestock in the woods. Foresters can learn more about silvopasture Best Practices using a variety of internet-based resources.*



*The harvesting to create silvopasture requires a deliberate process and prescription. Low value trees are harvested and high value trees retained. Retain uniform spacing among residual trees. After harvesting, the canopy should have about 50% closure. Be alert for potential problem plants, often those in the understory, that might dominate*

There are some specific steps you could use to locate a forester who could help you. Contact a grazing specialist at Cornell Cooperative Extension, Soil and Water Conservation Service or Natural Resources Conservation Service. These specialists work with numerous livestock producers, and some of the livestock producers are foresters or have worked with a forester. Attend meetings of your county or regional grazing association, or other grazing conferences and ask other participants regarding their experience with a forester. Contact your state forestry agency and see if they know of foresters who work with livestock producers. Finally, post a request at <http://silvopasture.ning.com>, to see if other members can suggest a forester. Once you find a name, interview the forester just as you would for other forestry jobs to make sure they have the necessary skills and your commitment to sustainability.

There are several considerations of the harvest. We've listed several here, but please also review the blog at the ning site for some resources we have used at our silvopasture day-long workshops, such as our "Site Evaluation and Planning Guide."

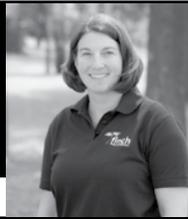
- The process of successfully developing a silvopasture results in (i) retaining the highest quality trees and (ii) growing high quality forage. Therefore, the forester needs to allocate the sunlight that would grow low value trees such as firewood or pulpwood to grow forages. Foresters don't typically intend to grow firewood or pulpwood, but they will recognize the low value trees interspersed among high value trees. Silvopasture requires that some of the sunlight that was captured in the upper canopy by low value trees be re-located to the forest floor to grow forage plants.

- Our current advice is that the forester will want to retain about 60 sq. ft. of basal area / acre. This is based on research in Missouri that suggests 50% of full stocking in oak stands as a desired residual, which is close to our recommendation. Other foresters we know have retained less basal area. The exact prescription will depend on initial abundance of desired trees, soils, species, tree size, and tree vigor. Also, a single and significant reduction in basal area (i.e., a heavy thinning) on thin soils could result in windthrown trees and could also cause epicormic branches to develop. Discuss these risks with your forester. Retain upper canopy trees of good form, species suited to the site, and as uniformly distributed as possible. The harvest will look much like a seed tree or heavy shelterwood cut, which is reasonable as these are regeneration cuts (i.e., treatments) but the difference is you are initially trying to regenerate forage not trees.
- The saplings and shrubs in the understory may be an insignificant amount of the basal area, but can significantly affect forage development. These small woody stems are able to capture sunlight needed by the forage. Similarly, invasive shrubs can respond quickly. Prior to the harvest identify potential woody understory problems.
- Because your woods were selectively cut and the most valuable trees removed, most stems will likely be of poor quality. Retain the best of what you have, looking for desirable species and stem quality to favor with release. It may take a few decades for these trees to attain desirable form and stature.

*continued on page 18*

# New York State Tree Farm News

ERIN O'NEILL



Every once in a while I like to talk about planning. People call it lots of things; management plan, stewardship plan, legacy plan... overall, it's just a plan for carrying out forestry, water and wildlife management on your woodlot.

Why is it so important? Why do I like to talk about it so much? I'm so glad you asked!

There are a couple things I like

to highlight and to be honest some of the reasons I like the most are very well worded in an article written by Meredith Odato at Cornell Cooperative Extension that NYFOA published in 2008. The most important, in my opinion, is that having a plan helps you write down your ownership objectives. Management decisions that focus on the ownership objectives shape the

future of your woodlot. That plan can set your family on a path that will become a legacy over generations, help you get to know your local resource professionals, and connect you to your land. A great place to start is by contacting your local extension office, DEC State forester or a consulting forester to set you off in the right direction!

Sometimes we get so busy, we suddenly realize it's been years since I've been to that back corner, right? Developing your plan will re-familiarize you with your property boundaries and you'll have a chance to see every acre of your woodlot. You'll become aware of the timber inventory (what types of trees, what size they are and how many of each kind) the wildlife habitat, water features and recreation potential... HEY, WAIT A MINUTE!!! That's the 4 sides of the Tree Farm sign! What do you know, by developing a written set of goals and formulating a plan for you and your family, you've just become a tree farmer!

One more great thing to keep in mind, a forest stewardship plan, by whatever name you call it, can be considered a business plan for your tree farm. This plan may help you qualify for cost-share incentives and being a certified tree farmer qualifies you for tax exempt farm purchases in New York State.

If you'd like more information about Tree Farm, or if you are interested in becoming a Tree Farm just remember, a Tree Farm representative is only a phone call (1-800-836-3566) or e-mail (nytreefarm@hotmail.com) away. 

*Erin O'Neill is the Chair of the NYS Tree Farm Committee.*

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# Kid's Corner

DEREK J. CONANT



This could be your photo here!

Do you have a photo of you and your kids or grandkids in your forest? If so, *The New York Forest Owner* would like to see it! Send an electronic or hard copy to *Forest Owner* editor, MaryBeth Malmsheimer, and it may end up on this page!

## Moss

Although seemingly insignificant, moss performs a highly important function in ecology, and for centuries moss has had a significant role in society as well. Relatively humble in size when compared to other plants, moss commonly goes unnoticed by those walking by. However, their numbers are great as are some of their physical abilities. There are roughly 12,000 species of moss and they can be found in almost every habitat on the planet.

Moss primarily grows in damp and shaded areas such as forests and along stream banks, but they can also be found growing in seasonally dry sandy habitats



Example of peat moss. Joy Viola, Northeastern University, Bugwood.org

— including the cold Arctic, and even between the cracks of hard surfaces like sidewalks. Ecologically moss performs an important role in soil stabilization and water retention. Moss are also very important for many invertebrates, serving as shelter and a moist microhabitat for invertebrates to live in.

Generally speaking, moss is an extremely resilient plant and has unique abilities that most plants do not have, chief among them the ability to withstand great change within an environment, and in particular drought. Most moss are what we call “desiccation tolerant,” meaning they can almost become completely dehydrated for long periods of time without dying! When it finally rains they absorb water quickly and rebound from dormancy. Also unlike most plants moss do not reproduce by seed but instead by spores which can be dispersed by wind, water, and animals.

Historically moss has been gathered and used by people for a variety of applications. The fact that it grows in almost every habitat makes it readily available to people and its clumping growth makes it very easily gathered. Moss do not have roots which make it easy to pull and many species grow in massive quantities



Another example of peat moss. Rob Routledge, Sault College, Bugwood.org

covering large areas. Three common forms of moss growth are cushion, turf, and mat forms. People have used moss to insulate homes, line pits to store food, provide comfortable bedding to sleep on, personal hygiene, caulking for boats, landscaping, gardening, fuel, bandages, and medicinal purposes.

Arguably peat moss (*Sphagnum*) could be considered the most desired moss. Its bogs have been heavily mined to serve as fuel, and as a soil additive for gardens. Its exceptional absorbing ability and slight antiseptic properties also made it very desirable to use for bandages and was used as such during WWI. So on your next hike stay on the lookout for moss and you too may have a use for it. ▲

Derek J. Conant is a Program Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Onondaga County.

# Wild Things in Your Woodlands

KRISTI SULLIVAN

## EASTERN COYOTE (*CANIS LATRANS*)



Alfred Viola, Northeastern University, Bugwood.org

*The eastern coyote is larger than coyotes in the west. Eastern Adult females average 35-40 pounds, while males typically weigh 45-55 pounds. The coloration of most eastern coyotes is similar to that of a German shepherd, with gray on the back, neck, and upper sides. Some coyotes may be a lighter reddish-blond color, or even solid black. From a distance, coyotes can be distinguished from dogs because they carry their bushy, cylindrical tail outstretched and pointed slightly downward. Coyotes also have yellow eyes, and pointed upright ears. They are much larger than foxes.*

**A**cross New York State, summer is the time of year that you are most likely to hear the complex sounds of coyote serenades. At this time, when family units are together, communication occurs through a series of overlapping high, trembling howls combined with a series of short, high-pitched yips. Hearing or seeing a coyote is a thrill indeed.

Once an animal associated with the west, coyotes now live in every state east of the Mississippi River. New York State is home to 20,000 to 30,000 coyotes, occurring everywhere in the State. They commonly inhabit overgrown fields, brushy thickets, and woodlands, and tend to travel trails, dirt roads and habitat edges. Although common in many areas, people rarely see them. Coyotes are usually secretive,

avoiding humans by day and becoming more active at nighttime.

Coyotes breed in February and give birth to from 2-10 pups (average 5-6) in April. Larger litters are born when coyote populations are low and food is plentiful. Mothers give birth in a ground den (e.g. renovated woodchuck or fox den), in hollow logs or rock caves. Families stay together until fall or early winter, when the pups leave the family unit.

Coyotes are omnivores and eat just about anything. They are opportunistic, eating whatever is most abundant and easiest to obtain at any given time. Food includes small mammals, rabbits, woodchucks, beaver, insects, berries and other fruit. Coyotes also kill deer, both adults and fawns. However, they seldom prey on

healthy adults and mostly feed on deer killed by other means (e.g. automobiles).

Although most coyotes are timid and stay away from people, some animals have lost their fear of humans. Coyotes that frequent highly populated areas are more likely to associate people with food and lose their fear. They do prey on house cats and may attack dogs, particularly as a territorial defense behavior during the breeding season and pup birthing period. Just seeing or hearing coyotes in the woods, fields, and brushy habitats in your area is little cause for alarm. However, a coyote that comes into your yard and refuses to leave even after you bang pots and pans to scare it away is a safety concern. The best thing you can do for coyotes is to do your

part to prevent them from associating food with people by keeping garbage, birdseed and pet food safely secured indoors. Keeping pets indoors or under your control, especially at night, can also prevent conflicts.

For more information about coyotes, visit <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dfwmr/wildlife/coyinny.htm>

*Kristi Sullivan works in the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University. She is Co-Director of the Conservation Education and Research Program, and Director of the New York Master Naturalist Program.*

Would you like to receive an electronic version of future editions of *The Forest Owner*? If so, please send Liana an email ([lgooding@nyfoa.org](mailto:lgooding@nyfoa.org)).

You will receive an email every two months that includes a PDF file of the publication. While being convenient for you – read *The Forest Owner* anytime, any place; this will also help to save the Association money as the cost of printing and postage continues to rise with each edition.



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### From the President (continued)

committee and a list of the many who have served on these committees over the years would be far more extensive than the one given above. I don't know of a single one of these steering committees, from chapters that are very vibrant to those that have been dormant for some time, that couldn't use more help. Many of these committees are most eager to have "fresh blood" join their ranks. I urge each of you to consider contacting your chapter's chairman (go to [www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org) and look under "Chapters" to see who they are) to see how you might contribute. They need skills ranging from simply applying stamps to envelopes to events coordinator to newsletter editor to chairperson. If you have trouble contacting the chapter chairman, please feel free to contact me.

Another way members contribute to our organization is to host a woodwalk on their property. These can be a simple 2-hour tour as guided by the owner or an extensive all-day event led by the owner's forester, a Cornell Cooperative Extension agent, a Master Forest Owner, or similar. If you'd like to host such an event on your property, contact your chapter's aforementioned events coordinator to help make that happen.

Finally, we are the beneficiaries of those who voluntarily make cash donations to our organization. This past Spring drive was particularly successful and I want to offer a big **thank you** to the many, many of you who have made contributions not only now but steadfastly over the years.

–Jim Minor  
NYFOA President

# Do Gasification Boilers Work ?

CHARLES BULSON

It depends on how you define Work...Work in terms of saving money? Work in terms of efficiency? Work in terms of producing heat? The answer is yes, to all of those. Mike Greason once told a joke about heating with wood; he said, "You want to get warm from the fire, not from running back and forth to the wood pile." I think we've accomplished what Mike set us out to do, in more ways than one.

We heated with oil and have a new oil fired boiler, along with a large older home. Our hot water is electric and we use a lot of it with a teenage daughter. We installed a Woodmaster Flex Fuel Furnace about a year ago. Our decision to try the Flex Fuel Furnace comes on the heels of \$5,000 to \$7,000 a year heating oil bills that are just too high for our family. "Thermostat Anxiety" I like to call it.



*Two Heat Exchangers, 1 for the boiler and 1 for the hot water.*



*A 10' X 10' insulated shed provides plenty of room to shelter equipment, operator and about 40 bags of pellets, or a half a face cord of wood.*

The Flex Fuel choice was based on my cousin's nudging, he has an outdoor wood boiler. He has a similar old home that cost just too much too heat. I was torn between choosing the convenience of Pellets and the free wood from thinning our woodlot to heat our home. My decision was made when I saw the Flex Fuel. I no longer had to be torn between my frugal side and enjoying the convenience of pellets. It burns wood or pellets.

I have a never-ending desire to be more responsible in my use of energy. Years ago, I had an eye opening conversation with a fellow on a plane who had unique insight into the future of global energy that is not available to the general public.

This past winter I was on business in the Midwest and took a detour up

to Woodmaster in Minnesota, to learn about the Flex Fuel furnace before I purchased it. The two days I was in Minnesota the air temperature was minus 37 degrees both days.

I had never been to Minnesota, it is a very flat open area. We drove for two hours on a country highway as straight as a ruler without hitting a stop sign before finding WoodMaster's corporate office in an industrial park. There was a sea of outdoor woodboilers around their offices. I was surprised to see how many there were. Thousands of them lined up like little soldiers in the arctic air.

We met the Woodmaster staff, which is mostly family, are very inviting, and really love what they do. Warren and Lynn took me through a two day adventure with the Flex Fuel Furnace.

It is a very advanced piece of heating equipment. It is computerized, and is European technology they are producing here in the USA. Before learning about the furnace, we had to learn about our home's BTU loss and what we would be heating. Lynn and Warren insisted we have the facts before we jump into the furnace.

The Flex Fuel boiler is much smaller than I expected, it looked more like a new car in a showroom. Inside there is a large circuit board with a lot of connections. It is called a Flex Fuel, because it can burn wood and pellets, and can be programmed or installed in many different ways to fit any installation. It can heat a home, water, pools, hot tubs, garages, outbuilding and driveways.

We purchased a 30kw Flex Fuel and installed it at our home. We built a shed for the Flex Fuel. I also figured I'd be bringing wood from the woodlot to the house and I didn't want to track in the dirt and bark that comes with firewood.

The Shed is 10 feet by 10 feet. This left a little extra room for some pellets and wood to be stored. I even built the roof a little long with an overhang to have a place to store wood out of the rain and weather. I also added lighting to allow us to get to the shed easily in the long dark days of winter.

After building the shed it was time to set the boiler. I had to use our log truck to set the boiler in place, it weighs 1,400 pounds. There was some work inside the house adding plate exchangers to the boiler and water heater.

After we finished the install, we could not wait to try the boiler! We went right up to the woodlot and found a standing dead ash tree, which was our first source of heat. The ash tree burned very well. We'd been burning wood in the boiler for a month or so before a business trip took me away again. What was I to do? The boiler needs to be loaded almost every day depending upon the outside temperature. Ask my family to load the boiler? I decided to throw some pellets



*Log Truck setting Flex Fuel boiler into the Shed*

in the bin and see how this boiler runs on pellets. Away I went, nervously trusting the Flex Fuel and an untested bin of pellets. I have a family member next door who agreed to check the house and make sure it was warm.

I returned three days later from my business trip with a fully heated house and some pellets left in the bin. Success!

I learned I really enjoyed the convenience of pellets. They burn evenly and I only have to visit the shed about every 3- 5 days. This is important for me. I travel quite a bit and did not have time this year to

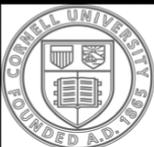
stockpile wood. I did however find time to help my cousin Billy store up 14 cords for his outdoor stove!

When I was burning wood, I found we only needed about 4-5 pieces of standard firewood a day to heat our house. I liked burning a mix of pine and hardwood. Our buffer tank is large, so burning the pine works well for us. We have lots of pine and I hate to see it go to waste. Burning hardwood produced more heat, but again, I have endless pine thinning. If improving my woodlot also heats my homeso much the better.

The Flex Fuel heats our water too.

*continued on page 17*

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# Woodland Health

*A column focusing on topics that might limit the health, vigor and productivity of our private or public woodlands*

COORDINATED BY MARK WHITMORE

## SEED COLLECTION: THE SILVER LINING IN THE FIGHT AGAINST THE EMERALD ASH BORER

BY CLARA HOLMES

### Germplasm Preservation

It is only a half inch in length, but the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is causing one of the worst ecological disasters in recent history. By feeding in the inner bark, it is causing the death of all three ash species found in New York State. On average, the basal area of Ash makes up over 7% of NY forests, and in some counties more than 25%. Some estimates of the number of individual ash trees in the state are above 900 million. Losing ash from our forests

will result in an unpredictable shift in our ecosystem as other species move in to fill the void. The loss of such a dominant species is significant and has precedent because it has happened previously with the American Chestnut and American Elm. The opportunity we have to protect our forest from the complete loss of ash germplasm *is* unprecedented however, as it has never been done before.

Beginning in 2005 (just three years after the initial identification of EAB as

the cause of ash mortality in the US), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) began collecting ash seed in Michigan, Indiana and Ohio to preserve the genetic resources of all ash species. This effort has grown and is now lead by the USDA Forest Service's National Seed Lab (NSL) and the USDA Agricultural Research Services. It has over 50 cooperators including the NRCS, the Bureau of Land Management, and, more locally, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank (MARSB).

The concept of banking ash seed is fairly basic: preserve genetic diversity of ash species now, so that it is available for restoration efforts when successful management techniques have been developed. Future EAB management will likely include a combination of successful biological control and incorporation of resistance into the trees. Collecting seeds is a fast and inexpensive way to preserve germplasm; under the right conditions, they can be stored for decades; they can be easily distributed to researchers and breeders; and they do not transmit EAB.

The strategy is a bit more complex. Each tree is genetically adapted to the conditions where it is thriving. The range of all ash species is vast, and so is the genetic variation. The goal of the ash collection program is to capture and preserve as much of this variation as possible; the more genetic variation, the better chance the offspring will be able to thrive in restoration efforts and the greater the chances of breeding a variety of ash that could be resistant to the insect. The implications of preserving a species ahead of its extinction are immense. For example, efforts to breed and reintroduce the American Chestnut only have 3-5 percent of genetic variation that originally existed, but the efforts to collect Ash seed, if fully successful, will provide well over 90% of the genetic variation present in populations throughout the nation. In fact, this type of effort to get ahead of the extinction curve represents a shift in the conservation paradigm.

The NSL developed a plan based



*Fraxinus pennsylvanica* seed.

on the Omernik Ecoregion Level III maps. Scientists with the NRCS and NSL determined the minimum number of seed collections needed to capture the maximum genetic variation, is 50 evenly distributed collections per species, per ecoregion. This strategy first gets implemented in areas where the EAB has already been discovered and then applied to surrounding areas.

In New York State there are nine different ecoregions and three different ash species (*Fraxinus americana*, *F. pennsylvanica*, and *F. nigra*). That makes a total of 450 collections per species for a grand total of 1,350 collections. Making seed collections represents a measurable action that every landowner can take, proactively.

### **Masting**

There is one complicating factor in collecting seed to preserve genetic resources of ash, and that is their reproductive biology. Ash trees are one of many tree species that exhibit a mass seeding phenomenon called masting. It is a cyclical event and occurs synchronously on a regional basis. Mast years are unpredictable and scientists don't fully understand what causes them. The first signs of a mast year can be found on ash trees in mid June. Immature seed panicles can be seen forming on the branches of trees. During this time, it is important to scout for trees throughout the state, so that in the fall, when the seeds are mature, collectors can spend less time searching for seed and more time collecting.



*A green ash tree loaded with seed in upstate New York*

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### **Pitching In**

In order to accomplish the goal of sufficiently preserving germplasm of ash species, the forests need your help. The National Seed Lab and Agricultural Research Service can only fund, at max, two, two-person collection teams, for two to three weeks during peak collections season. That's not two teams per state or per ecoregion, but nationally. The EAB has invaded 23

*continued on page 16*

## Woodland Health (continued)

states to date, making the collection of 1,350 seed lots from New York quite challenging. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank is cooperating with both the NYS DEC and the NSL in this effort, and was recently awarded a three year grant through the Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry Competitive Allocation Fund to focus efforts on collecting a-sh seed throughout New York State.

MARSB was established in the winter of 2012 by the New York City Parks Department's Greenbelt Native Plant Center. The mission of MARSB is to collect seed from targeted native plant species across every eco-region in the mid-Atlantic. The ash collection grant will allow MARSB to make over 150 ash collections over three years and hold five ash collection and seed banking workshops each year. As a cooperater with the NSL, MARSB will follow

the national collection protocol for ash and will ship all seed to the long term storage seed bank used by the NSL.

This is a large multi-year project and there is plenty of opportunity for individuals and small groups to help out, from scouting to collecting. We do not yet know if any of the next three years will be mast years, but you can help us figure that out by identifying ash trees in your area and watching for seed crops over the summer. If 2014 is a mast year, you can contact us to make collections from your ash trees or you can attend one of the workshops to learn how to make collections on your own. We are particularly interested in working with arborists, as they may have local knowledge of tree locations and a way to access the tops of trees. If you are interested in learning more about MARSB and efforts with ash seed please visit the website ([www.marsb.org](http://www.marsb.org)) or

email Clara Holmes, the Seed Collection Coordinator, at [clara.holmes@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:clara.holmes@parks.nyc.gov).

The National Seed Lab believes the projected destruction to native ash stands is so great that only a genetically diverse collection of germplasm will be able to provide the needed material for breeding and eventual reintroduction. Help be a part of the Emerald Ash Borer solution by becoming a volunteer seed collector! 🌲

*Clara Holmes has been the Seed Collection Coordinator for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank since 2013. She manages all seed collection and outreach efforts for MARSB and has spent several years supporting native plant conservation in the Northeast. She can be reached at [clara.holmes@parks.nyc.gov](mailto:clara.holmes@parks.nyc.gov) or (718) 370-9044 ext. 300*

*Mark Whitmore is a forest entomologist in the Cornell University Department of Natural Resources and the chair of the NY Forest Health Advisory Council.*



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*Past Issues of the Forest Owner*

NYFOA is looking for various issues of the *New York Forest Owner* from the 1970s-1990s.

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## Do Gasification Boilers work? (continued)



*Lights provide for safe loading during long winter nights*

This is where we noticed unexpected savings. Our electric bill is down about 30% every month. We found this added benefit to be the most delightful part of using the boiler. The hot water never runs out. We can shower, run laundry and do dishes without ever having to think if we have enough hot water.

I love pellets, they are easy, burn well, and leave me to do other things. Next year, I'm sure I'll burn more wood, as my schedule is not as full

as it was this past year. It is work to pick up bags of pellets and load the bin, but certainly less than gathering, splitting and stacking wood. We are contemplating installing a large grain bin and auger to get a truckload of pellets for next season. That remains to be analyzed on the dollars and cents though.

I am very proud we only ordered a hundred gallons of heating oil for emergency use. When we got stuck out of state in a snow storm this winter season, our emergency oil came in handy. Our oil boiler kicked on when the pellets ran out. I don't miss the huge oil bills and calling around to find the best price for oil.

Do gasification boilers work? We certainly are saving money in the long

run. I estimate we will save about \$4,900 a year in oil costs and about \$225 a year in electric costs. It will take us about four years to recover our investment and begin saving the money we were spending. We will keep the thermostats wherever we want them, and the hot water will run as long as we want.

I find that buying the pellets and splitting wood involve some physical work, but it feels good physically, and in my soul. We certainly have not found an overall permanent energy solution for our country. Until then, I'll do my part right here, in my little corner of it. 🌲

*Charles Bulson is a proud NYFOA member. Questions on this project can be directed to [cjbulson@yahoo.com](mailto:cjbulson@yahoo.com).*

Are you interested in a particular topic and would like to see an article about it.

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## Ask a Professional (continued)



Be alert to the need to manage logging slash through whole tree harvesting, mulching, or piling. Also, develop a forage establishment plan before harvesting. (Picture by E. Newbold)

- The size of the harvest should balance with an area that you are able to manage with your herd. Harvesting too much area may mean that some areas aren't adequately grazed and will develop into a "brush lot" that is subsequently difficult to control with livestock.
- Hopefully the logging will be whole-tree to help you remove branch wood and slash. Too much slash will make it difficult for

your livestock to maneuver in the silvopasture and perhaps difficult to develop forages. If desirable, you can leave scattered clumps of tree tops as habitat for wildlife.

- You may want to retain some low value trees around the perimeter of the harvest to use as "living fence posts." Living posts are less expensive than installing treated posts and generally as durable. We have pictures of living fence posts on the ning site.
- Summer logging will help scarify the soil. Depending on what used to grow at the site, there may be some seeds of pasture plants in the seed bank. If necessary your local NRCS grazing technician could prescribe a forage seed mix suited to the soil.
- At some point you will regenerate the trees in the silvopasture area. Livestock will provide area-wide control of interfering plants, but you may also need to provide localized and intensive control through herbicides or other types of livestock (e.g., chickens or pigs) to allow natural regeneration to establish. You will need to protect either individual trees with tubes or protect groups by excluding livestock with the same fence you used to include them. 🏠

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Response by: Peter J Smallidge, NY Extension Forester, Cornell University Cooperative Extension, Department of Natural Resources, Ithaca, NY. Pjs23@cornell.edu, 607/592-3640 and Brett Chedzoy, Senior Resource Educator - Ag and Natural Resources, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schuyler County, South Central NY Agricultural Team, Montour Falls, NY





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## Welcome New Members

We welcome the following new members (who joined since the publishing of the last issue) to NYFOA and thank them for their interest in, and support of, the organization:

Name	Chapter
Charles Baker	SOT
Anthony Bonaventura Jr.	NFC
Mel Dyster	NFC
Earl & Shirley Gates	SOT
James Hanneman	CDC
Steve Haskell	AFC
Ted & Kathleen Hayek	SOT
Jodi & Dan Hudon	CNY
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## MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Materials submitted for the September/October Issue should be sent to Mary Beth Malmsheimer, Editor, *The New York Forest Owner*, 134 Lincklaen Street, Cazenovia, NY 13035, (315) 655-4110 or via e-mail at [mmalmshe@syr.edu](mailto:mmalmshe@syr.edu) Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use.

**Deadline for material is August 1, 2014**



# Member Profile:

## *Jimmy Bulich*

MAUREEN MULLEN

Jimmy Bulich and his wife Micaela live in Catskill in Greene County. Jimmy grew up in the area, but had moved away for a time. They now own two parcels up there, just a few miles apart: one was originally bought with Jimmy's parents in 1997 to be used as hunting land; the other was bought in 1998 when Jimmy and Micaela moved back to the area to raise a family. While Micaela works in Schenectady as the VP Global Supply Chain for GE Renewables, Jimmy made the switch from control systems engineer to stay-at-home-dad/beef farmer. Now that Jimmy's sons are both in college, he can focus his time and energy on managing the farm and forests.

Before Jimmy and Micaela moved back to Catskill, they lived in Stuart's Draft, Virginia, located in the Shenandoah Valley. While there, they met a tree farmer who inspired the Bulichs. "He wasn't just about trees; he was about

so much more, native wildflowers and habitat for birds," Jimmy said. "I'm a systems guy... I'm very much interested in the big picture, the processes, how everything works together. So I began reading about ecosystems and learned about symbiotic relations, how some species are interdependent upon other species." When the Bulichs bought the parcel they live on, they knew they wanted to manage the land in a holistic, ecosystem-wide manner.

The parcel of land that the Bulichs live on is 120 acres total, made up of woodland (55 acres) and pasture (65 acres), and is where Jimmy raises grass-fed beef. The farm was a dairy farm for about 50 years before the Bulichs bought it and "anything that could be plowed was." The 55 acres of woodland is secondary forest made up of sugar maple, hickory, oak, and basswood with pockets of pine and hemlock. The



*Our farm wood lot is at the end of this rainbow.*

hunting land parcel, which is now fully owned by Jimmy and Micaela, is an 88-acre parcel made up of hillside forest (81 acres) and swamp and meadow (7 acres). The dominant tree species are oak, hickory, and pine with sugar maple, black birch, and hemlock in the older stands. The Bulichs use their land for farming, deer and turkey hunting, firewood, birding, hiking, cross-country skiing, and learning to identify all manner of species found on the properties.

Jimmy has management plans for his forested areas. He first worked with his friend and mentor Mike Greason, the former DEC Chief Forester who retired and became a consultant. After Mike's untimely passing, Jimmy hired consultant forester Mary Spring, a protégé of Mike. The 88-acre hillside forest is enrolled in 480a. They've done some timberstand improvements and continue with ongoing timber management. The biggest challenge Jimmy has had to manage in the forests is the encroachment of invasive species and the overpopulation of white tailed deer. When he and Mike first drafted the management plan in 1999, Asian Longhorn Beetle, Hemlock



*Forester, friend and mentor, the late Mike Greason got me involved in NYFOA and MFO, as he did for so many grateful forest owners. This sugar maple at our farm, shown in 2007, is now 32" dbh.*

*continued on page 22*



*Outdoor wood boiler in a different light. Firewood from timber harvests and TSI work offsets 700-800 gallons of fuel oil.*



*This buck walked up the trail I walked down from my tree stand just an hour before. Trail cameras are a great way to see what and who is on the land.*

Woolly Adelgid, Emerald Ash Borer, Oriental Bittersweet, and Japanese Stiltgrass were not problems they were even aware of. Now, Jimmy and Mary, his forester, are taking these invasives into account and thinking about, “How does that affect woodland? How does that affect your opportunity to grow the next generation of forest? What will that forest look like? It’s an ongoing challenge.” And while Jimmy manages

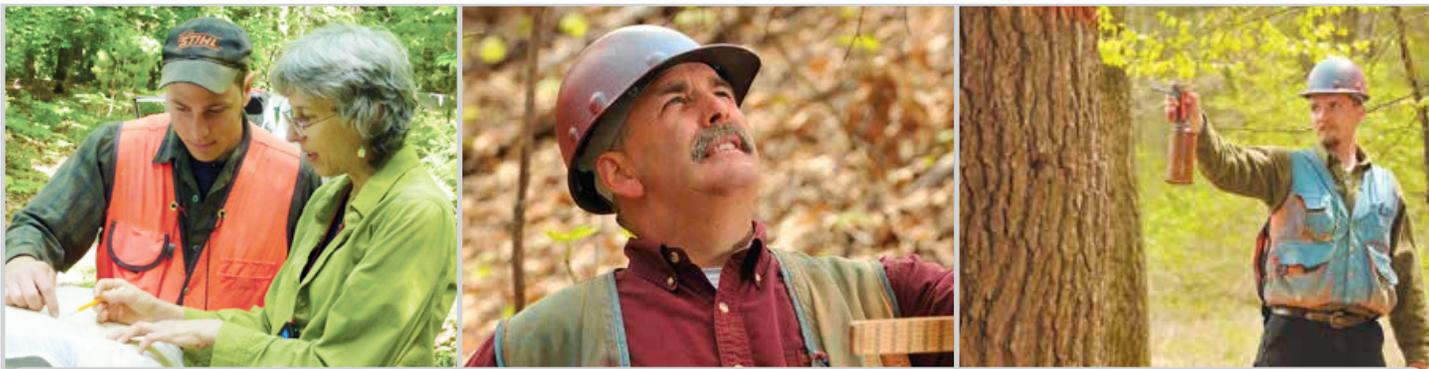
the farmland for beef, he does his best to manage the meadows and forests for wildlife habitat. For example, Jimmy tries to maintain areas for bird-nesting and deer fawning and he plants native wildflowers. He’s been working with Dr. Suzanne Beyeler of Cornell University for the last few years; her research team monitors the salamanders and bird nests on the Bulichs’ property. Jimmy is trying to use that information, especially the

bird nests, to help better manage his forests. “It’s very interesting to find out where birds are making their nests. When you’re managing forest land, a lot of times you’re just looking at the trees, thinking of the value of the trees, the species of the tree. There’s been many times when we found a nest and it’s just a junky old tree and I think, ‘Man, I would have just cut that tree down,’ and then we find a nest in it! It gives me a wider perspective on ‘what is a bird looking for?’ It improves the way we manage our forest for more than just trees; we’re managing for a healthy habitat.”

Jimmy became a NYFOA member and joined the Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program in 1999, thanks to advice from Mike Greason, who was responsible for recruiting so many NYFOA members.

Jimmy has been involved in woods walks and seminars and notes there is just so much to learn. There are great people to meet, facing similar issues and some new ones. There are people who have good experiences and bad experiences and you learn from both. When you go on woods walks, you find out how folks are dealing with their woodlot, what they’re trying to accomplish, and how they’re doing. These woods walks create a shared knowledge and a network of people that are involved and concerned. By being involved in this network of people who have dealt with foresters and loggers you are able to receive professional references. And when you’re working with professionals who are doing a good job — and they’re all necessary: you need a forester, you need a logger, you need a trucker, you need a log-buyer, you need everybody to manage woodlands — it makes the whole system work! Through NYFOA, you really tap into that network and knowledge of people committed to sustainable forestry. 🌲

*Maureen Mullen is an Extension Aide at Cornell Cooperative Extension, Human Dimensions Research Unit, Cornell University. Dr. Shorna Allred is the faculty advisor for the NYFOA Member Profile Series.*



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